

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A printer selecting device comprising:  
accepting means for accepting input information representative of a desired number of printings;

deciding means for comparing the input information with a preselected reference number;

selecting means for automatically selecting a printer having a lowest printing cost from a plurality of printers ~~matching with the desired number of printings based on an output from the deciding means~~; and

data outputting means for outputting image data to be printed to the printer selected by said selecting means.

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): A device as claimed in claim 1, wherein when said plurality of printers include a stencil printer, said selecting means selects said stencil printer if the desired number of printings is greater than [[a]] the preselected reference number inclusive.

Claim 3 (Original): A device as claimed in claim 2, further comprising displaying means for causing a display to show said printer selected by said selecting means.

Claim 4 (Original): A device as claimed in claim 3, wherein said displaying means displays said printer such that another printer can be substituted for said printer, as desired.

**Claim 5 (Previously Presented):** A device as claimed in claim 3, wherein when said stencil printer is selected and displayed, said displaying means displays how much said stencil printer is advantageous in printing cost than at least one of the other printers of the plurality of printers.

**Claim 6 (Original):** A device as claimed in claim 5, wherein said displaying means displays said printer such that another printer can be substituted for said printer, as desired.

**Claim 7 (Original):** A device as claimed in claim 1, further comprising displaying means for causing a display to show said printer selected by said selecting means.

**Claim 8 (Original):** A device as claimed in claim 7, wherein said displaying means displays said printer such that another printer can be substituted for said printer, as desired.

**Claim 9 (Previously Presented):** A device as claimed in claim 7, wherein when said stencil printer is selected and displayed, said displaying means displays how much stencil printer is advantageous in printing cost than at least one of the other printers of the plurality of printers.

**Claim 10 (Original):** A device as claimed in claim 9, wherein said displaying means displays said printer such that another printer can be substituted for said printer, as desired.

**Claim 11 (Previously Presented):** A printer selecting device comprising:  
accepting means for accepting input information representative of a desired number of printings;

operating and displaying means for displaying on an operation and display section a plurality of printers together with printer-by-printer additional information indicating at least a printing cost for decision and based on the desired number of printings in such a manner that any one of said plurality of printers can be selected; and

data outputting means for outputting image data to be printed to the printer selected on said operation and display section.

Claim 12 (Previously Presented): A printer as claimed in claim 11, wherein said printer-by-printer additional information also indicates at least one of a printing time, and an image quality level.

Claim 13 (Currently Amended): A printing system comprising:  
at least one image data supply device for outputting image data to be printed;  
at least one number setting device for setting a desired number of printings;  
a plurality of different kinds of printers each being capable of printing the image data received from said at least one image data supply device; and  
a printer selecting device comprising accepting means for accepting input information representative of the desired number of printings, deciding means for comparing the input information with a preselected reference number, selecting means for automatically selecting a printer having a lowest printing cost from said plurality of printers ~~matching with the desired number of printings based on an output from the deciding means~~, and data outputting means for outputting the image data to the printer selected by said selecting means.

Claim 14 (Original): A system as claimed in claim 13, wherein at least one of said plurality of printers comprises a stencil printer.

Claim 15 (Original): A system as claimed in claim 14, wherein information representative of a printing cost particular to said stencil printer is capable of being freely set in said printer selecting device.

Claim 16 (Original): A system as claimed in claim 14, wherein said stencil printer is registered at said printer selecting device beforehand as an essential printer, and wherein when said stencil printer is not identified at the time of operation, said printer selecting device outputs a preselected message meant for an operator.

Claim 17 (Original): A system as claimed in claim 13, wherein at least one of said plurality of printers comprises a multiplex image processing machine including said image data supply device and said number setting device.

Claim 18 (Original): A system as claimed in claim 13, wherein at least one of said plurality of printers comprises a multiplex image processing machine including said image data supply device, said number setting device, and said printer selecting device.

Claim 19 (Original): A system as claimed in claim 13, wherein each of said plurality of printers includes a respective printer controller for receiving the image data, and wherein at least one terminal unit including said image data supply device, said number setting device and said printer selecting device and printer controllers of said plurality of printers are interconnected by a communication medium so as to interchange data.

Claim 20 (Original): A system as claimed in claim 13, wherein said printer selecting device is constructed into an independent unit.

Claim 21 (Currently Amended): A printing system comprising:  
at least one image data supply device for feeding image data to be printed;  
at least one number setting device for setting a desired number of printings;  
a plurality of different kinds of printers each being capable of printing the image data received from said at least one image data supply device; and  
a printer selecting device comprising accepting means for accepting input information representative of the desired number of printings, deciding means for comparing the input information with a preselected reference number, selecting means for automatically selecting a printer having a lowest printing cost from said plurality of printers matching with the desired number of printings based on an output from the deciding means, and data outputting means for outputting the image data to the printer selected by said selecting means.

Claim 22 (Original): A system as claimed in claim 21, wherein at least one of said plurality of printers comprises a stencil printer.

Claim 23 (Original): A system as claimed in claim 22, wherein information representative of a printing cost particular to said stencil printer is capable of being freely set in said printer selecting device.

Claim 24 (Original): A system as claimed in claim 22, wherein said stencil printer is registered at said printer selecting device beforehand as an essential printer, and wherein

when said stencil printer is not identified at the time of operation, said printer selecting device outputs a preselected message meant for an operator.

Claim 25 (Original): A system as claimed in claim 21, wherein at least one of said plurality of printers comprises a multiplex image processing machine including said image data supply device and said number setting device.

Claim 26 (Original): A system as claimed in claim 21, wherein at least one of said plurality of printers comprises a multiplex image processing machine including said image data supply device, said number setting device, and said printer selecting device.

Claim 27 (Original): A system as claimed in claim 21, wherein each of said plurality of printers includes a respective printer controller for receiving the image data, and wherein at least one terminal unit including said image data supply device, said number setting device and said printer selecting device and printer controllers of said plurality of printers are interconnected by a communication medium so as to interchange data.

Claim 28 (Original): A system as claimed in claim 21, wherein said printer selecting device is constructed into an independent unit.

Claim 29 (Currently Amended): A printing system comprising:  
at least one image data supply device for feeding image data to be printed;  
at least one number setting device for setting a desired number of printings;  
a plurality of different kinds of printers each being capable of printing the image data received from said at least one image data supply device;

a printer selecting device comprising accepting means for accepting input information representative of the desired number of printings, deciding means for comparing the input information with a preselected reference number, selecting means for automatically selecting an adequate one of said plurality of printers ~~matching with the desired number of printings based on an output from the deciding means~~, and data outputting means for outputting the image data to the printer selected by said selecting means; and

displaying means for displaying the printer selected by said selecting means on a display section;

    said selecting means selecting, when said plurality of printers include a stencil printer, said stencil printer if the desired number of printings is greater than [[a]] the preselected reference number inclusive.

Claim 30 (Original): A system as claimed in claim 29, wherein at least one of said plurality of printers comprises a stencil printer.

Claim 31 (Original): A system as claimed in claim 30, wherein information representative of a printing cost particular to said stencil printer is capable of being freely set in said printer selecting device.

Claim 32 (Original): A system as claimed in claim 30, wherein said stencil printer is registered at said printer selecting device beforehand as an essential printer, and wherein when said stencil printer is not identified at the time of operation, said printer selecting device outputs a preselected message meant for an operator.

Claim 33 (Original): A system as claimed in claim 29, wherein at least one of said plurality of printers comprises a multiplex image processing machine including said image data supply device and said number setting device.

Claim 34 (Original): A system as claimed in claim 29, wherein at least one of said plurality of printers comprises a multiplex image processing machine including said image data supply device, said number setting device, and said printer selecting device.

Claim 35 (Original): A system as claimed in claim 29, wherein each of said plurality of printers includes a respective printer controller for receiving the image data, and wherein at least one terminal unit including said image data supply device, said number setting device and said printer selecting device and printer controllers of said plurality of printers are interconnected by a communication medium so as to interchange data.

Claim 36 (Original): A system as claimed in claim 29, wherein said printer selecting device is constructed into an independent unit.

Claim 37 (Currently Amended): A printer selecting device comprising:  
an accepting section configured to accept input information representative of a desired number of printings;  
a deciding section configured to compare the input information with a preselected reference number; and  
a selecting section configured to automatically select a printer having a lowest printing cost from a plurality of printers ~~matching with the desired number of printings based on an output from the deciding section~~; and

a data outputting section configured to output image data to be printed to the printer selected by said selecting section.

**Claim 38 (Previously Presented):** A device as claimed in claim 37, wherein when said plurality of printers include a stencil printer, and said selecting section selects said stencil printer if the desired number of printings is greater than a preselected reference number inclusive.

**Claim 39 (Previously Presented):** A device as claimed in claim 38, further comprising a displaying section configured to cause a display to show said printer selected by said selecting section.

**Claim 40 (Previously Presented):** A device as claimed in claim 39, wherein said displaying section displays said printer such that another printer can be substituted for said printer, as desired.

**Claim 41 (Previously Presented):** A device as claimed in claim 39, wherein when said stencil printer is selected and displayed, and said displaying section displays how much said stencil printer is advantageous in printing cost than at least one of the other printers in the plurality of printers.

**Claim 42 (Previously Presented):** A printer selecting device comprising:  
an accepting section configured to accept input information representative of a desired number of printings;

an operating and displaying section configured to display on an operation and display section a plurality of printers together with printer-by-printer additional information indicating at least a printing cost for decision and based on the desired number of printings in such a manner that any one of said plurality of printers can be selected; and

a data outputting section configured to output image data to be printed to the printer selected on said operation and display section.

Claim 43 (Previously Presented): A printer as claimed in claim 42, wherein said printer-by-printer additional information also indicates a printing time, and an image quality level.

Claim 44 (Currently Amended): A printing system comprising:

at least one image data supply device configured to output image data to be printed;

at least one number setting device configured to set a desired number of printings;

a plurality of different kinds of printers each being capable of printing the image data received from said at least one image data supply device; and

a printer selecting device including an accepting section configured to accept input information representative of the desired number of printings, a deciding section configured to compare the input information with a preselected reference number, and a selecting section configured to automatically select a printer having a lowest printing cost from said plurality of printers matching with the desired number of printings based on an output from the deciding section, and a data outputting section configured to output the image data to the printer selected by said selecting section.

**Claim 45 (Previously Presented):** A system as claimed in claim 44, wherein at least one of said plurality of printers comprises a stencil printer.

**Claim 46 (Previously Presented):** A system as claimed in claim 45, wherein said stencil printer is registered at said printer selecting device beforehand as an essential printer, and wherein when said stencil printer is not identified at the time of operation, said printer selecting device outputs a preselected message meant for an operator.

**Claim 47 (Previously Presented):** A system as claimed in claim 44, wherein at least one of said plurality of printers comprises a multiplex image processing machine including said image data supply device and said number setting device.

**Claim 48 (Previously Presented):** A system as claimed in claim 44, wherein at least one of said plurality of printers comprises a multiplex image processing machine including said image data supply device, said number setting device, and said printer selecting device.

**Claim 49 (Previously Presented):** A system as claimed in claim 44, wherein each of said plurality of printers includes a respective printer controller for receiving the image data, and wherein at least one terminal unit including said image data supply device, said number setting device and said printer selecting device and printer controllers of said plurality of printers are interconnected by a communication medium so as to interchange data.

**Claim 50 (Previously Presented):** A device as claimed in claim 1, further comprising displaying means for causing a display to show said printer selected by said selecting means.

Claim 51 (Previously Presented): A device as claimed in claim 50, wherein said displaying means displays said printer such that another printer can be substituted for said printer, as desired.

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